

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1, 2, 4, 6 and 8 are pending and are amended. Claim 1 independent. Claims 3, 5, 7 and 9 are canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Claim for Priority

The Examiner has recognized Applicants' claim for foreign priority and receipt of the certified copy of the priority document. No additional action is required at this time.

Objection to Drawings

The drawings are objected to on the grounds that every feature of the present invention is not shown. Specifically, the drawings fail to show the features of claims 3, 5 and 7.

Claims 3, 5 and 7 are canceled, thereby overcoming the objection to the drawings for not showing the features in these claims. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. This rejection is respectfully traversed. The claims are amended in accordance with the Examiner's helpful comments. It is respectfully submitted that the claims comply with the

requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)/§103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 5, and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 2,154,569 to Hicks. Claims 1, 2, 5, 8, and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 2,871,025 to Neher. Claims 1, 2, and 4-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,005,857 to Camuffo. Claims 1, 3, 5, and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 2,375,670 to MacPherson.

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,170,373 to Beck et al. in view of Hicks. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Neher in view of Official Notice, and over Camuffo in view of Official Notice. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

While not conceding the appropriateness of any of the rejections, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, independent claim 1 is amended to recite a combination of elements in a vehicle independent suspension system, including "a compression spring... having an upper end and a lower end, said upper end of the compression spring being connected by a fifth articulating joint to the vehicle body, wherein a bump stop is mounted on the vehicle body below the fifth articulating joint to engage the upper control arm when the spring is compressed."

It respectfully submitted that this combination of elements set forth in independent claim 1 is not anticipated or made obvious by the cited art of record, including Hicks, Neher, Camuffo, MacPherson, or Beck et al.

Hicks discloses a vehicle wheel suspension system, including an arm 13, connectors 14 and 15, and a cylinder 49 housing springs 51 and 52, as shown in FIG. 1. However, Hicks does not teach or suggest "a compression spring having an upper end and a lower end, said upper end of the compression spring being connected by a fifth articulating joint to the vehicle body, wherein a bump stop is mounted on the vehicle body below the fifth articulating joint to engage the upper control arm when the spring is compressed," as recited in presently amended claim 1, since Hicks nowhere teaches a bump stop.

Neher discloses a steering knuckle mounting, which includes an upper link 7, a lower link 10, a compression coil spring 14, a shock absorber 17, and a rubber collar 24, as shown in FIG. 1. Neher further discloses rubber bumpers 25 and 26 attached to the underside of the link 7 and to the upper side of the link 10, respectively. The bumpers 25 and 26 serve to limit vertical movement of a crossbar 1 with respect to the links 7 and 10. The positions of the bumpers 25 and 26 in Neher are very different from that of the claimed "bump stop" in the present invention. Whereas the bumpers 25 and 26 in Neher are connected to the links 7 and 10, the "bump stop" in the present invention is connected to the vehicle body and serves to engage the upper control arm when the spring is compressed. Accordingly, Neher does not teach or suggest the above-cited limitations of claim 1.

Camuffo discloses an independent rear suspension, including a cross member 2, a lower arm 15, an upper strut 27, a helical spring 32, and shock absorbing means 33. However, as with Hicks, Camuffo nowhere mentions a "bump stop." Accordingly, Camuffo does not teach or suggest the above-cited limitations of claim 1.

MacPherson discloses a motor vehicle, in which a shock absorber 50 with surrounding coil springs 45 extend from an upper wishbone link 40, as shown in FIG. 6. Nowhere, however, does MacPherson teach or suggest the presently claimed "bump stop." Accordingly, MacPherson does not teach or suggest the above-cited limitations of claim 1.

Beck et al. shows two embodiments of a wire suspension arm, including a lower support arm 20, an upper support arm 26 supported on a wheel support spindle 32, and a suspension spring 40 extending from a spring seat connected to the lower support arm 20, as shown in FIG. 1, and extending from the upper support arm 26, as shown in FIG. 2. However, Beck et al. does not teach or suggest the claimed "bump stop" of presently claimed invention. Accordingly, Beck et al. does not teach or suggest the above-cited limitations of claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the combination of elements set forth in independent claim 1 is not anticipated or made obvious by the cited art of record. Since the remaining claims depend from allowable claim 1, they are also allowable for at least the reasons stated above, as well as for the additional limitations provided by these claims. Thus, all claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and §103(a) are, therefore, respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Since the remaining patents cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject claims, but merely to show the state of the art, no comment need be made with respect thereto.

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Sam Bhattacharya (Reg. No. 48,107) at (703) 205-8000.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,
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